

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2684) making appropriations for the Department of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Cunningham amendment to restore funding for the Selective Service System.

The sole mission of the Selective Service is to support our country's military readiness by supplying manpower to the Armed Forces adequate to ensure the security of the United States during a time of national emergency. The Selective Service is a small agency with a budget of less than \$25 million. It relies on more than 10,000 volunteers who would serve on local, national and civilian review boards during a draft.

Registering for the Selective Service is one of the few requirements we place on our young people. It is also one of the few opportunities we have to encourage young adults to consider public service. Through the response mechanism in the registration process, the Selective Service System provides men 18–25 years of age with information about a range of ways, military and civilian, to serve their country. These messages address all of the armed services, as well as civilian service opportunities, including America's Promise and Job Corps.

At a time when our nation faces recruitment shortages and retention problems, it would be unwise for this body to terminate the one agency responsible for maintaining an up-to-date list of people that could be called upon should we need to return to a draft. Defense Secretary Cohen, the National Security Council, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and our nation's leading military service organizations oppose the elimination of funding for the Selective Service System because it could compromise this country's future mobilization capability.

During a time of peace and with a strong economy, it would be very easy to abolish the Selective Service System. Who would notice? Many consider it out-of-date and unnecessary when we have the strongest military force in the world. But it would be a dangerous gamble to assume that we will never again need to rely upon the draft. If the Selective Service System is terminated and our nation was faced with a crisis, it would take more than a year to recreate the System. These sorts of delays could be disastrous in a state of emergency and could prevent a draft from being fair and equitable.

Today's Selective Service System is also prepared to conduct a special skills draft, such as a draft for health care personnel, if the

need arises. The ability to enact a health care draft would be critical if our nation ever experiences a military conflict involving mass casualties from nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. This is just one more benefit of a modern Selective Service System that provides an economically efficient way to support our manpower needs in a state of emergency.

If Congress eliminated the Selective Service, it would be more costly to our nation in the long run to recreate the functions of this agency. A GAO study concluded that the costs associated with dissolving the Selective Service System and then gearing it back up would amount to more than \$100 million. A decision so important to our ability as a nation to fulfill its constitutional obligations of providing for the common defense should be taken up by the Congressional authorizing committees, not the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. Chairman, the House has debated the status of the Selective Service several times in the past decade and, each time, a clear majority has supported maintaining the Selective Service System. I urge my colleagues to continue this commitment to the Selective Service and vote for the Cunningham amendment.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM BARKER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 1999

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the passing of William Barker, a leader in the California agriculture community.

A fifth generation Monterey County native, Bill served for forty-three years as the manager of the Monterey County Farm Bureau, guiding the agriculture community through years of profound change. He became manager of the local farm bureau chapter in 1958, when the Salinas Valley had, for the most part, dairies and dry bean farms. Salinas Valley is now a salad bowl, as well as producing wines, cut flowers, organic crops and herbs. Other significant changes developed in environmental and labor regulations, and in the urbanization of farmlands. Bill never failed to keep farmers aware of what was on the horizon and what would be best for the industry.

Bill's emphasis on education programs helped to keep the community-at-large aware of the role that agriculture plays in their daily lives. He was an early supporter of Monterey County Education Inc.; he was deeply involved with local and Statewide 4-H programs and the Future Farmers of America Programs in high schools; and he was founder and Chairman of the County's COLA (Coalition of Labor, Ag and Business).

Bill took a leadership role in the community as well: as President of the Salinas Chamber of Commerce; as a member of the Board of the United Way of Salinas Valley; as director of the Monterey County Fair for 12 years and president of the fair for 3 years; and as President of the Steinbeck Foundation Treatment Center. He was on the Board of Directors of the Monterey Resource Conservation District, and in the 1980's he assisted with the establishment of the Monterey County General Plan.

Bill died January 21, 1999, leaving his wife Norma; two sons, Bill and Tom; two daughters, Carole and Susan, and three grandchildren and a host of friends and admirers. Bill was always an advocate for and champion of the agricultural community. His vision and leadership will be greatly missed.

HONORING MR. ROBERT W. GRAHAM ON THIS, HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY, FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OF JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

HON. WILLIAM L. JENKINS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 1999

Mr. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Robert W. Graham of Johnson City, Tennessee for his ongoing commitment to service toward his community. Throughout his life, Mr. Graham has displayed the hard work and honorable virtue that has won him the respect and admiration of his peers.

Ten years ago, Mr. Graham moved to Johnson City following distinguished service as a government engineer. As one might expect from Mr. Graham, the purpose of his move was to continue his dedication to public service. He organized a local chapter of the Service Corps of Retired Veterans (SCORE), an organization designed to assist under-funded individuals enter into business for themselves. Mr. Graham has been actively involved in SCORE for all of his ten years in Johnson City, and currently serves there as Chairperson of Chapter 584. Under Mr. Graham's watch the program has expanded to include five counties in upper east Tennessee as well as three regional offices.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present to this Congress Mr. Robert W. Graham, who this September 18 will be celebrating his 75th birthday, and ask my colleagues to join me in honoring his life of outstanding service and uncommon dedication.

HONORING BOB AND LINDA BARNES ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR RETIREMENT FROM SPRINGVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 1999

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 43 years of combined service of Robert and Linda Barnes to Springville Elementary School.

Bob and Linda retired from the Springville Griffith Institute School earlier this year, marking the first time in more than two decades neither was there to greet incoming students at the onset of the school year.

Bob served as Principal of Springville Elementary School since 1976. His wife, Linda, has been secretary since 1979. They were married in 1983.

Mr. Speaker, from parental feedback to standardized test scores, Springville Elementary School has thrived under the Barnes'